

1                   **REMARKS**

2                   Page 1 of the specification is amended to add the serial numbers of the  
3 related applications.

4                   Claim 1 is amended in response to an indefiniteness rejection and  
5 claims 10-16 are amended to improve clarity. Claim 17 is amended to add the  
6 feature "wherein a level of trust associated with the indications depends upon a  
7 first condition of the one or more first conditions", which is supported by at least  
8 claim 1 as originally filed. No new matter is added. Accordingly, claims 1-21  
9 remain pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of  
10 all pending claims.

11                                   **Interview Summary**

12                   A telephonic interview was held between the undersigned, Examiner Kim,  
13 and Examiner Barron on September 13, 2004. Discussed were:

14                   (1) whether the cited portion of Blaze taught the feature "the level of trust  
15 associated with the second element is dependent on the first condition" as recited  
16 in claim 1;

17                   (2) nesting of keys in PGP systems;

18                   (3) whether the rejection of claim 1 was based on nesting of keys; and

19                   (4) status of proposed draft amendment that was faxed to central fax  
20 number. No agreement was reached.

21                                   **Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112**

22                   **Claim 1**

23                   Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being  
24 indefinite for lack of antecedent basis. In response, claim 1 is amended to recite  
25 antecedent basis.

## Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

### Claims 1-17 and 19-21

Claims 1-17 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the reference “Decentralized Trust Management” (hereinafter “Blaze” in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,044,467 (hereinafter Gong). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 recites in pertinent part:

receiving at least a second condition and a second element of evidence, wherein the second condition is associated with the permission set and a level of trust associated with the second element is dependent upon the first condition. (emphasis added)

The Office Action asserts that the “first condition” and the “first evidence” recited in claim 1 are satisfied by Blaze because Blaze discloses “A’s verifiable digital signature on B’s key is the condition, and A’s public/private key pair is evidence”.

The Office Action also asserts that the “second condition” and the “second evidence” recited in claim 1 are satisfied by Blaze because Blaze discloses “A to verify trustworthiness of B’s key is condition, and digital signature of A is evidence.”

Applicants respectfully traverse. The level of trust associated with the digital signature of A (what the Office Action terms the “second evidence”) does not depend on A’s verifiable digital signature on B’s key (what the Office Action terms the “first condition”). Rather, Blaze explicitly discloses on page 2, second column, lines 5-9:

a user may specify the *degree of trust* that he has in each introducer; an individual may be designated *unknown, untrusted, marginally trusted, or completely*

1                    *trusted*. Each user stores his trust information ...”  
(emphasis original).

2                    Thus, Blaze discloses that the level of trust is determined by the user, which  
3 is not dependent upon what the Office Action terms as the “first condition”. Gong  
4 is cited as disclosing a means for secure class resolution, loading and definition.

5                    Further, the level of trust associated with A’s public/private key pair (what  
6 the Office Action terms the “first evidence”) is not independent of the digital  
7 signature of A (what the Office Action terms the “second evidence”). That is,  
8 there is *dependence* between A’s public/private key pair and the digital signature  
9 of A. In contrast, claim 1 also recites, “a level of trust associated with the first  
10 element of evidence is *independent* of other evidence and conditions”.

11                   Therefore, the cited combination teaches/suggests neither “*a level of trust*  
12 *associated with the second element is dependent upon the first condition*” nor “a  
13 level of trust associated with the first element of evidence is *independent* of other  
14 evidence and conditions” as recited in claim 1. Because the cited combination  
15 does not teach or suggest each and every element of claim 1, the cited combination  
16 fails to make out a prima facie case of obviousness for claim 1. Accordingly,  
17 claim 1 and dependent claims 2-10 are patentable over the cited references.

18                   Claim 11 recites features similar to features recited in claim 1 related to the  
19 level of trust of a second element being dependent upon a first condition and the  
20 independence of the first element of evidence to other evidence and conditions.  
21 Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that claim 11 and dependent claim 12 are  
22 patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is  
23 patentable.

24                   Claim 13 recites a similar feature regarding the level of trust of a second  
25 element being dependent upon a first condition. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert

1 that claim 13 is patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons that  
2 claim 1 is patentable.

3 Claim 14 recites a similar feature regarding the level of trust of a second  
4 element being dependent upon a first condition. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert  
5 that claim 14 is patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons that  
6 claim 1 is patentable.

7 Claim 15 recites a similar feature regarding the level of trust of a second  
8 element being dependent upon a first condition. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert  
9 that claim 15 and dependent claim 16 are patentable over the cited references for at  
10 least the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable.

11 Claim 17 as amended recites a similar feature regarding the level of trust of a  
12 second element being dependent upon a first condition. Thus, Applicants  
13 respectfully assert that claim 17 and dependent claims 19-21 are patentable over the  
14 cited references for at least the same reasons that claim 17 is patentable.

15 Claim 18

16 Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Blaze  
17 in view of Gong and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,052,678 (hereinafter Itoh).  
18 Applicants respectfully traverse.

19 Claim 18 depends from amended claim 17. As discussed above, Blaze and  
20 Gong do not render amended claim 17 obvious. Itoh is cited as disclosing a problem  
21 solving apparatus using state transition. However, Applicants respectfully assert that  
22 this disclosure does not overcome the deficiencies of Blaze and Gong in the rejection  
23 of claim 17. Consequently, the cited combination of Blaze, Gong and Itoh do not  
24 teach each and every element of claim 17 and, thus, fails to make out a prima facie  
25 case of obviousness. Accordingly, claim 17 is also patentable over the combination



1 of Blaze, Gong and Itoh. As claim 18 depends from claim 17, claim 18 is patentable  
2 over Blaze, Gong and Itoh for at least the reasons that claim 17 is patentable.  
3

4 **CONCLUSION**

5 In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants believe all  
6 pending claims are allowable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowability is  
7 respectfully requested.

8 Respectfully Submitted,

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10 Dated: Sept. 14, 2004

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